

## ***Frequently Asked Questions about Filing a Complaint With the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission***



### **What is the PDC's jurisdiction?**

The PDC has jurisdiction to enforce state laws and rules in RCW 42.17A and former RCW 42.17, and Title 390 WAC, regarding campaign finance, lobbying, and personal financial affairs statements. It does not enforce federal laws or rules, or local ordinances. The PDC does not enforce the Public Records Act at RCW 42.56.



### **How do I file a complaint?**

Submit your written complaint to the PDC. A sample recommended complaint form is available from the PDC and is on the website at [www.pdc.wa.gov](http://www.pdc.wa.gov) under "Enforcement and Compliance."



### **What happens after I submit a formal complaint?**

- PDC staff will review the complaint to make sure it is not unfounded, frivolous, or outside PDC jurisdiction.
- If the complaint proceeds, the person/entity you filed a complaint against will be notified in writing and given a copy of the complaint, and the complaint will be posted on the PDC website.
- Complaints with sufficient detail showing a violation of RCW 42.17A or former RCW 42.17, or Title 390 WAC, may move on to the investigation stage. Incomplete complaints may not be investigated or you may be asked to provide more information.
- If an investigation finds evidence of a material violation of the laws or rules enforced by the PDC, the PDC may take enforcement action or refer the matter to the Attorney General's Office.
- If insufficient evidence of a material violation is found, the case may be dismissed. Complaints may also be dismissed if the person/entity complained about is found to be in substantial compliance with PDC laws and rules.



### **How long will it take to investigate my complaint?**

The length of time needed to complete an investigation depends on several factors. These can include complexity, PDC caseload levels, budgetary constraints, and how easily an investigator can find information needed to complete the investigation. More complex cases usually take longer to investigate.



### **Will I hear from the PDC after I file my complaint?**

- PDC staff will acknowledge your complaint in writing and give you the name of the investigator.
- PDC staff will also contact you if they have questions about your complaint or evidence, if the complaint is dismissed without enforcement action, or if an open public hearing or proceeding before the Commission is scheduled. (You may be called as a witness in a hearing, but otherwise are not a participant in the hearing.)



### **I have more information or evidence about my complaint, what do I do?**

If at any time during the investigation you discover more information please contact the PDC.



### **What do I do if I have questions about filing a complaint?**

If you have questions or concerns about filing a formal complaint, contact the PDC. Also, if you have a disability which requires assistance in filing a complaint, contact the PDC and we will take reasonable steps to accommodate your needs.

#### **PDC Contact Information**

**MAILING ADDRESS:** Washington State Public Disclosure Commission

711 Capitol Way, Room 206

PO Box 40908

Olympia, WA 98504-0908

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** [pdc@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:pdc@pdc.wa.gov)

**PHONE:** 1-877-601-2828 (toll-free)

**FAX:** (360) 753-1112

**HOURS:** Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., closed on state holidays.